



Inspired by yesterday, Learning today, Leading tomorrow

Attendance Policy

2025-27

Review Date: September 2027

1. Introduction

St John's Primary School is committed to providing an environment where every child can thrive. Regular attendance is essential for pupils to achieve well; benefit fully from the learning experiences available to them; build strong relationships, and develop positive habits for life.

For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, they must attend school every day, on time, unless absence is unavoidable. Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.

This policy sets out how we work in partnership with families to promote excellent attendance and punctuality.

2. Why Regular Attendance Matters

- Absence disrupts learning and affects progress.
- Missing lessons can lead to gaps in knowledge that are difficult to close.
- Poor attendance can affect a child's confidence, friendships and wellbeing.
- Children are safest when they attend school regularly, where they are supervised by trained professionals.
- Good attendance habits in primary school support success in secondary school, further education and employment.

The law requires parents to ensure their child attends school regularly under the Education Act 1996.

3. Promoting Good Attendance

Attendance is everyone's responsibility — pupils, parents, staff and governors.

At St John's we will:

- Report attendance and punctuality to parents at least three times a year.
- Celebrate good attendance through certificates, class awards and recognition events.
- Monitor attendance patterns and intervene early where concerns arise.
- Work with families to remove barriers to attendance.
- Promote the importance of attendance through assemblies, newsletters and parent events.

Our minimum expectation for all pupils is 95% attendance, though we aim for higher.

4. Understanding Types of Absence

Schools must classify every half-day absence as authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised Absence:

Absence may be authorised for reasons such as:

- illness
- medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours
- religious observance
- exceptional circumstances (see Section 5)

Evidence may be requested.

Unauthorised Absence:

Absence will be unauthorised when:

- No reason is provided
- The reason is not acceptable
- A child arrives after registers close
- A holiday is taken during term time without permission
- A pattern of illness is not supported by medical evidence
- A child is kept off for reasons such as birthdays, shopping or family days out

Unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice or legal action.

5. Exceptional Leave (Term-Time Leave)

There is no automatic right to take a child out of school during term time.

The headteacher may only authorise leave in exceptional circumstances. Holidays are not considered exceptional.

Requests will be refused when:

- Attendance is below 96%
- There is evidence of previous unauthorised leave
- The request forms part of a pattern
- The child is at risk of persistent absence

Penalty Notices may be issued in line with Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007.

6. Absence Procedures

If your child is absent, parents must:

- Contact the school by phone or email on the first morning of absence.

- Provide an honest reason for the absence.
- Keep the school updated if the absence continues.

If we do not hear from you:

- We will phone or email on the first day.
- If no contact is made by day 3, a home visit may be carried out.
- Ongoing concerns may lead to a meeting in school to identify barriers and support needs.
- If attendance falls below 90%, a referral may be made to the Local Authority Attendance Team.

7. Lateness

Good punctuality is essential.

- The school day begins at 8:45am.
- Pupils arriving after this time will receive a late mark.
- Registers close at 9:10am.
- Arrival after this time will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless a valid reason is provided.

Persistent lateness will be addressed with parents and may result in further action.

8. Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil is classed as a Persistent Absentee when attendance falls to 90% or below.

We will:

- Notify parents when their child is at risk of becoming PA
- Put in place an Attendance Support Plan
- Offer early help and pastoral support
- Monitor attendance closely
- Refer to the Local Authority if attendance does not improve

9. Severe Absence (SA)

A pupil is classed as a Severe Absentee when attendance falls to 50% or below.

These cases are treated as urgent and will involve:

- Senior leadership oversight

- Multi-agency support
- Possible statutory intervention

10. Local Authority Involvement

If school-based support does not lead to improvement, the school may refer the case to the Local Authority Attendance Team.

They may:

- provide impartial advice to families
- issue a Penalty Notice
- initiate legal proceedings under Education Act 1996, Section 444
- consider an Education Supervision Order.

11. Communication and Contact Details

Parents must ensure the school has:

- up-to-date phone numbers
- email addresses
- contact details for both parents and at least one additional emergency contact.

This is essential for safeguarding and attendance monitoring.

12. Responsibilities

Parents and Carers

- Ensure regular attendance and punctuality
- Notify school of absence
- Work with school to resolve concerns

Pupils

- Attend school every day
- Arrive on time
- Engage positively with learning

School Staff

- Promote good attendance
- Monitor patterns and intervene early
- Support families to overcome barriers

Governors

- Monitor attendance data
- Review this policy annually

13. **Summary**

Regular attendance is essential for children's learning, wellbeing and future success. St John's Primary School is committed to working in partnership with families to ensure every child attends regularly and benefits fully from their education.

Dance Policy